

# Trumacar Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119272
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339396
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Byrne

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	277
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs H Summerfield
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Chambers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Combermere Road Higher Heysham Morecambe LA3 2ST
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed, taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff, pupils and the School Improvement Partner. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, the progress and attainment of pupils, the curriculum, the school's improvement plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The inspection team analysed 55 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and also those from staff and pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the rate of progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, across the school
- the quality of the management and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and whether staff are deployed effectively to provide for these needs
- the effectiveness of the management systems in promoting accurate school self-evaluation and whether the school has the capacity to improve
- the accuracy of the assessments of children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage and the progress made by children within it.

## Information about the school

This is an above-average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has achieved Healthy School status and gained accreditation for the Financial Management Systems in Schools. Since the last inspection, the school buildings and outdoor areas have been almost entirely remodelled.

Since March 2010, an associate headteacher, seconded from another primary school within the authority, has led the school on a part-time, temporary basis to cover for the long-term absence of the headteacher.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

### Main findings

The school currently provides an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. However, in accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required to the quality of leadership and management to secure and sustain improvement and provide an accurate evaluation of the school's performance.

Children progress well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many begin nursery with abilities that are low for their age and leave the Reception class with skills that are just below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment is currently broadly average by the end of Year 6. Girls do markedly better than boys in English, and attainment in writing is lower than in other subjects but improving. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in some aspects of teaching in upper Key Stage 2. Lessons are generally well managed and relationships within them are good. Pupils' progress is restricted at times because they are not always actively involved in their learning.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Pupils behave well and feel safe. Care, guidance and support are good overall. Good guidance is provided for those in need of emotional and behavioural support. However, pupils feel that their views are not always listened to. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given satisfactory support. As a result, they generally make satisfactory progress. However, although teaching assistants are dedicated and hardworking, their role is not managed effectively enough to ensure these pupils are always appropriately supported.

Partnerships with parents and carers are inadequate because the school does not involve them enough in shaping the direction of the school. While the majority of parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed support for the school, a small minority of those returning their questionnaires stated that their views were not valued enough. Concerns were also expressed by a relatively high proportion of respondents about the effectiveness of leadership and management. Despite the capabilities of staff, including middle managers, to lead and develop the school, their skills are not utilised sufficiently. A clear vision for the school is not articulated at senior level. This weakness is exacerbated by ineffective strategies for consulting with staff and enabling them to monitor their subjects. This has resulted in the school self-evaluation being inaccurate. Improvement since the last inspection, other than to the buildings, has been slow. Many essential management changes have

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recently been introduced or systems developed under the strong leadership of an associate headteacher supported by a committed deputy headteacher. These changes or developments are not yet secure. Leadership remains fragile and the school's capacity to sustain improvement is, therefore, inadequate.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management, by:
  - - ensuring that all staff share the same vision for the school and participate fully in the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning process
  - - developing effective strategies to build and utilise the skills of phase leaders and subject leaders in leading and monitoring performance
  - - widening opportunities for the school's leaders to consult with staff, pupils and governors.
- Raise further pupils' enjoyment, achievement and progress by:
  - - introducing strategies for promoting writing across the school and accelerating the reduction in the gap between boys' and girls' performance, particularly in English
  - - developing strategies that enable pupils to work independently and to be involved in making decisions about their learning
  - - sharing the good practice in teaching within the school so that the rate of pupils' progress is consistently good
  - - deploying teaching assistants more effectively and making better use of their skills to meet the needs of pupils.
- Improve the way in which the school engages with parents and carers, by involving them more in the work of the school and canvassing and acting upon their views on how the school can improve the quality of its provision.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils are generally quiet and willing learners. Behaviour is good. Pupils are respectful of others and celebrate their successes. For example, a pupil who had filmed a dance she had choreographed and performed was warmly applauded by classmates.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and there is evidence of some recent improvement. Attainment at Key Stage 2 has risen to average from below average three years ago. In 2009, pupils in Year 6 made satisfactory progress overall from their starting points in Year 1; girls did much better than boys. This was most noticeable in English, where girls do better in writing. Recent initiatives to improve writing introduced in Years 4 and 6 are beginning to tackle this issue and narrow the gap. In Key Stage 1, attainment is average overall although the proportion of pupils exceeding expectations in writing is lower. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress from their starting points. Their progress is improving as the school is reviewing changes in the provision for these pupils and the use of teaching assistants.

Pupils report that they feel safe. The recently introduced behaviour management strategies are starting to have an impact on how well pupils treat each other. Pupils

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have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise. Whilst they have a desire to contribute to their school community and their involvement in the school council and an Eco Club has extended the extent to which they take on responsibility, their views are not always valued enough. Opportunities for pupils to get involved in the local community are satisfactory, but pupils have some gaps in their awareness of communities in the wider United Kingdom and globally. Attendance is average. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. This, coupled with satisfactory academic skills, results in pupils being prepared appropriately for their next stage of education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Pupils' learning is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory rather than good because there is a lack of clarity from the school's senior leadership about what is expected of staff. Teachers and teaching assistants are dedicated to doing the best for the children. However, the lack of a coherent structure for professional development and uncertainty about how to make best use of assessment to inform planning restrains

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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effectiveness. At its best, teaching is vibrant, skilfully employs humour and has a sense of urgency about pupils getting things done to a good standard. In some classes in Key Stage 1, an overuse of worksheets reduces scope for pupils to express themselves, develop their independence or extend their basic skills to new contexts. There are some missed opportunities to use new technology to engage pupils and further inspire learning. The quality of marking varies. The best examples inform pupils how they might improve, but occasionally targets are too general and pupils are less clear of how to move on.

The satisfactory curriculum has strengths in developing pupils' personal, social and citizenship education. Pupils have access to a good range of activities beyond lessons. The school acknowledges that it is yet to fully implement a whole-school system to develop the skills of writing. Trials of new approaches to teaching writing, in two classes, have proved successful but this good practice has not been fully shared. Some lessons lack content that is sufficiently exciting and stimulating to inspire pupils.

The good caring ethos within the school helps pupils to be settled. Good initiatives, led and managed by the deputy headteacher, learning mentor and special educational needs staff, help pupils with a variety of personal and emotional issues. The 'Horizons' and 'Chill Out' room assist pupils who need to share concerns with a caring professional or to simply take time to reflect in a tranquil environment. Secure links with outside agencies connected with health and education enable staff to bring in specialist support where it is required.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leadership at the highest level has lacked continuity in recent times as a result of the prolonged absence of the permanent headteacher. The senior leadership team has maintained satisfactory day-to-day management of the school, but it is relatively inexperienced and has not been able to improve the school sufficiently. Recent improvements, such as those in the use of assessment information, have occurred but these are too new to show any impact on pupils' progress. Staff are keen to improve educational provision. However, they have not been directed in a manner that makes best use of their skills in order to ensure the highest quality of education for pupils. The roles of key staff, such as subject leaders, are unclear and the staff lack sufficient awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. A lack of effective

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performance management, linked to individual targets, diminishes opportunities for staff to improve and to develop their own performance. As a result, there is not a shared vision for the school's development or a full commitment amongst staff to push home initiatives that are adopted, often with minimal consultation. The monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour and consistency.

Governance is satisfactory and the governing body has strived to ensure that the school has maintained an even keel during periods when leadership at the highest level has not been secure. Governors are aware of what needs to be done to improve the school from satisfactory to good. They make sure that good safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place. Parents and carers have limited opportunities for supporting and making decisions about their children's education or for influencing what goes on at school. Partnerships, for example, with other schools and institutions such as initial teacher education providers, contribute to the pupils' satisfactory achievement. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities and promotes this satisfactorily; action is taken when patterns of under performance appear. The school is a cohesive community, and there is a clear policy for promoting cohesion within it. Strategies to promote cohesion beyond the local community, however, are in the early stages of development. Despite inadequacies in the effectiveness of leadership and management, the determination of staff has ensured that the outcomes for pupils are currently satisfactory and, therefore, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**



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Strong and effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure children receive a good start to their education. The weaknesses found in the main school are not present. Staff are managed well and a strong team spirit and shared philosophy is being developed. Good relationships and happy, secure children are evident in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff successfully ensure children's safety and give good attention to their welfare. The quality of teaching varies slightly between classes but is good overall. At its best, children are encouraged to be independent and to have the confidence to make their own decisions. Assessment and tracking are effective in informing planning so that the needs of individuals are met. Planning ensures good quality learning indoors, but is not as clear about the use of the outdoors. At times children are not able to move independently from indoor to outdoor activities as much as they could.

Overall attainment for the large majority of children is low on entry but most children make good progress. Great emphasis is placed on helping children to improve their personal, social and emotional development and also in their grasp of language and literacy. This pays dividends as their progress in each of these areas is very good. By the time children move onto Year 1, a small minority reach the standards expected for their age, although for the majority attainment is just below average in all areas of their development. The support of parents and carers is highly valued and staff have good strategies to encourage them to be involved their children's education. Links are developing with a Children's Centre within the community so that parents and carers receive support where desired.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Responses from parents and carers show that support for the school is mixed. All parents and carers that responded say their child enjoys school and virtually all say that the school keeps their child safe. The inspection team's judgements mirror these views. Almost a fifth of parents and carers say they feel that leadership and management are not effective enough. A small minority feel that the school does not take account of their views and suggestions and also that behaviour is not dealt with effectively. Inspectors found that, during the inspection, behaviour was well managed and that systems have improved greatly over the last year or so. However, inspectors identified weaknesses in the effectiveness of leaders and managers to make and sustain improvements, although

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the day-to-day running of the school ensures pupils are well cared for and achieve satisfactorily. The views of parents and carers were found by inspectors to have little influence on the school's educational direction.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trumacar Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 277 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	58	23	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	62	18	33	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	49	23	42	4	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	53	20	36	6	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	51	23	42	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	38	26	47	6	11	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	51	23	42	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	49	20	36	6	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	36	23	42	8	15	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	42	19	35	6	11	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	20	36	22	40	8	15	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	51	23	42	3	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



16 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trumacar Community Primary School, Morecambe, LA3 2ST

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed joining you in an assembly, in lessons and talking to you in and around the school.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to school life. The school provides you with good care and personal support. You are all kept safe and helped when you are worried or upset. Your behaviour is good and your progress is satisfactory. You understand about how to live safe and healthy lives and you like helping others.

Standards in writing are not as high as they could be, especially among the boys. You do not always have enough opportunities to work independently in order to develop your skills and make better progress. We have asked the staff to improve the way that you are taught by making lessons more interesting and practical.

Your school has struggled in recent times because it has had no permanent headteacher. This has reduced its ability to improve. Inspectors have asked school leaders to work together more effectively to help the school improve further. Senior leaders in your school should give greater attention to your views and, in particular, those of your parents and carers.

We have judged that your school needs extra support and we have given it a 'notice to improve'. Another inspector will visit to check that things are improving.

I wish you all the very best in your future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr David Byrne

Lead Inspector

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